ROMAN BRITAIN, ROME IN BRITAIN:

CULTURAL INTEGRATION AND INTEGRITY IN THE AGE OF EMPIRE

AN ABSTRACT

SUBMITTED ON THE EIGHTH DAY OF JULY 2016

TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

OF TULANE UNIVERSITY

FOR THE DEGREE

OF

MASTER OF ARTS

BY

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This thesis seeks to explore the various ways in which the inhabitants of Britain adapted, adopted, or ignored Roman culture from the second century BC to the fifth century AD, covering the periods before, during, and after Roman rule. The first chapter will briefly discuss current scholarly approaches to the spread of Roman culture and the provincial expression of "Romanness" in Roman studies. In the second chapter, I look at concepts, materials, animals, and people who arrived from elsewhere in the Roman world and what they brought to Britain. The third chapter makes up the bulk of this thesis and is divided into sections organized by time period; it explores various native British expressions of Roman culture, which differed from region to region, displaying the diversity of Britain in the Roman period. It also addresses the question of whether or not Roman culture was a "thin veneer" that vanished quickly after the Roman withdrawal in AD 410 and comes to the conclusion that by the fifth century it was an integral part of British life in the former province. The final chapter sums up the material discussed in the preceding chapters. In order to best explore this subject, I have looked primarily at archaeological research of Britain in the Roman period, along with the relevant primary source literature and relevant secondary material, including theoretical approaches to globalization, imperialism, post-colonialism, and the so-called "Romanization paradigm." In this thesis I will use the above to form, as much as possible given the limitations of the available evidence, a coherent narrative of British expressions of both Roman and British culture during the Roman period.

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Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Dennis Kehoe and Dr. Thomas Frazel, both of whom I knew when I was an undergraduate at Tulane, and both of whom were kind enough to allow me to come back for graduate study. Returning to the Tulane Classics Department was something I knew I wanted to do as soon as I graduated with my bachelor's degree, and I feel very privileged to have been allowed to do so.

I would also like to thank my friend Alexina Duncan, for unwavering moral support over the past year and without whom I undoubtedly would have given up somewhere along the way. Thank you, Xena, and may the Force be with you.

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1. Introduction: Romanization and Romanitas

The study of the Roman provinces is at its core a study of identity and its expression. Far afield from the Italian core of the empire, the residents of Rome's far-flung provinces found themselves at the crossroads of a crisis of identity. They were Roman now, but what that meant and what it entailed differed greatly from region to region and from individual to individual – sometimes having value, sometimes being worthless. This new identity did not put an end to former identities, either; the residents of the provinces were also still members of their respective ethnicities, tribes, social classes, and all the other myriad ways in which humans have divided themselves over the years. It was in the provinces that these identities met and mingled, creating new methods of expression as Roman culture intersected and interacted with various native cultures.

While to some extent this is a distinction created by modern scholars, writers such as Tacitus have shown that there was a strong conception of Roman culture during the imperial period. Tacitus, writing of Agricola's governorship of Britain, describes what seems to be an organized program to build temples, fora (usually translated as "courts"), and Roman-style houses (*domus*), as well as to provide an education to the sons of the chiefs, though curiously not to the chiefs themselves. So eager are the newly-conquered Britons to embrace these standards of Roman living that they take up not only the Latin tongue, but also the toga and other forms of Roman dress. In fact, as far as Tacitus is concerned, they are perhaps a little too fond, as they soon find themselves entranced not only by the civilized customs of Rome, but also by what he views as its vices: porticos, baths, and elegant banquets (Tac. *Agr.* 21). Tacitus, of course, had an agenda, and his

presentation of Britain is as Rome's "moral antipodes," so that the more trappings of Roman culture it accepts the more morally corrupt – and in turn, more Roman – it becomes (Woolf 1998, 69). Tacitus shared with other classical ethnographers a conception of non-Roman barbarians as a kind of "noble savage," whose lack of civilization is at once to be admired and remedied (Woolf 2011).

Rome's own cultural mythos was heavily rooted in heterogeneity, revolving around its ability to adapt to changing circumstances and to draw in others around it. While individuals like the Julii might claim lines of mythical descent for purposes of status, the Roman people defined themselves as a community that had gained power and indeed, grown to rule a significant portion of the world, by accepting and integrating those who had initially been outside the group (Woolf 1998, 74). Unlike the Greeks, Rome's cultural mythos was fundamentally inclusive – anything and everything could become Roman under the right circumstances (James 2014, 102). Not only that, but surely everyone *wanted* to be Roman, because to be Roman was to be culturally and socially superior, conveying advantages in all realms of life.

It is from these two dual perspectives that modern scholars have approached Rome's advance in the provinces: first, that the Roman government had a vested interest in making the inhabitants of the provinces culturally Roman, and secondly that those inhabitants desired both the physical trappings of Rome and to *be* culturally Roman. This process is normally called Romanization, while the Roman cultural package delivered by this process is known variously as Romanitas, *humanitas*, or *paideia* (Woolf 1998; Gerrard 2013). These terms encapsulate, or attempt to encapsulate, the cultural values of Rome in the first century BC. By embracing and displaying these cultural values, elite

individuals anywhere in the Roman world could become as Roman as any senator born and raised in the city itself. Romanitas provided a cultural level to which to aspire (Webster 2001, 210; James 2014, 98).

The problem with this approach is that it is fundamentally elite-focused. The Romanization paradigm, as David Mattingly has pointed out, has been "dissected to the point of dismemberment" over the past twenty years, largely by British Romanists whose focus has been on Roman Britain (2014, 37). In short, it focuses too greatly on elite individuals and elite sites and on sameness across the empire, positing at best a "trickle-down" approach to non-elites. Since the mid-1990s, a number of other approaches have been offered by various scholars, attempting to provide new ways of studying and conceptualizing the interaction of the Roman world with the people who lived within their sphere of influence – not just within the provinces, but also beyond Rome's borders.

In recent years, new theories of globalization, imperialism, and colonialism developed in the crucible of the modern world have been applied to the Roman empire. The wisdom of using these approaches has been much debated, since they were developed to apply to modern nation-states; it has been argued that as a classical civilization, Rome ought not to be looked at through theories developed to deal with, for example, the British Empire or the United States – globalization theories meant to deal with a truly global economy or culture, while Rome ruled a relatively small portion of the known world (Pitts and Versluys 2015b; Mattingly 2014, 45). The counter-argument is that Rome considered itself to be a world-spanning civilization; as well, it functioned, as much as possible given the technological constraints of the period, as one. Indeed, it has

more in common with other modern imperial regimes than it does with contemporary classical ones (Mattingly 2011, 269).

One definition of globalization is "the processes by which localities and people become increasingly interconnected and interdependent" (Pitts and Versluys 2015b, 11). This is largely evidenced through consumption and homogeneous forms of material culture – not so coincidentally, the primary forces used to trace the spread of Rome through its sphere of influence. Samian ware or *terra sigillata*, a type of red-glazed wheel-thrown pottery produced in Gaul and common in the western empire, is one of the most well-known examples; a single Samian sherd on an otherwise entirely "native" site is enough to label it as "Roman," while its absence may well name that same site "resistant" and "anti-Roman" (Pitts 2015; Webster 2001). Despite what James Gerrard calls the "fetishisation of material culture," this is by necessity: archaeology is focused on what is there, not what is not (2013, 86). This does, however, create certain conceptual difficulties: the vast majority of material culture is not preserved, while that which remains is often used to stand in for the whole. Archaeological remains, whether that be Samian ware, bow brooches, or half of a damaged mosaic, is often interpreted to signify acceptance of the entire Roman cultural package, values and all.

The problem is, of course, that humans are simply not that predictable. The presence of items associated with one culture does not mean that they are being used for the purpose for which they were originally designed. Versluys uses the example of porcelain china in the seventeenth century – a globally produced good re-appropriated by China to be produced for an elite and aspiring elite European market, but originally developed from a Persian concept made from Mongol China (Versluys 2015, 142).

Likewise, in my own home, I often use traditional English-style teacups (made and purchased in England, then brought to the United States) as small bowls for fruit or ice cream or as part of my mise-en-place while cooking, as well as for both English- and Japanese- style tea drinking. The presence of an item developed for and associated with a specific purpose does not mean it was used in such a way, and this was true in the Roman world as well as it is now. For examples, *mortaria*, the large deep bowls used to grind spices and produce purees, have previously been identified as a major indication of Romanization in kitchen culture. However, H.E.M. Cool has shown that *mortaria* may have been used in Britain for purposes other than food preparation – some have been discovered with charring on the bottom that suggests they were used for cooking, and others may have simply served as decorative and functional bowls (2004, 31). Hybridity of use as well as design will always occur whenever cultures interact with each other, something that more scholars would do well to remember.

Not everything was, or could be, hybridized. If we can believe Tacitus, it seems that some attributes of Roman cultures were delivered more or less wholesale, and certainly individuals who wanted to compete on any non-local scale would be expected to familiar with a cultural language shared throughout the empire. This shared cultural language manifested in different ways – the Latin and Greek languages were both part of it, as was a knowledge of the Greco-Roman mytho-cultural repertoire. Other aspects of the Roman world translated to the provinces not as pieces of the Roman cultural package, but as technological innovations that simply made life easier; farming equipment seems to have fallen into this category (Rees 2011). Some, including pests like the black rat and

possibly the garden dormouse, were introduced by accident (O'Connor 2010, 6; Dobney et al. 1999, 28).

There are a number of different names that have been proposed for the translation of aspects of Roman culture to the provinces and the extra-Roman world, from the much-maligned "Romanization" to Jane Webster's "creolization" and David Mattingly's "discrepant identities," as well as more neutral terms such as "acculturation," "cultural convergence," and merely "becoming Roman" (Webster 2001; Mattingly 2006; 2011; James 2014; Woolf 1998). As much as possible I have attempted to avoid using any of these, since all of them come with their own baggage and largely place themselves in opposition to each other. Rather, my intent is to look at the ways in which Britons adopted and adapted certain aspects of Roman culture prior to and during the Roman period in Britain, as able to be traced in the material culture of the period.

This is by necessity a rather fast and slapdash survey of nearly six hundred years of British history, a subject which many scholars have spent their entire careers on. I have avoided certain aspects of Romano-British archaeology – religion, jewelry, and burial culture, among others – in an attempt to concentrate as much as possible on the lived day to day experience of those who inhabited Britain in this period. While I touch on the military, a major aspect of Roman rule in Britain, my concern is with the native civilian population, so I have devoted less space to them than perhaps they deserve.

I have attempted in this thesis to discuss briefly the intrusive aspects of Roman domination in Britain, which was indisputably an act of colonial violence that manifested in different ways across the island. However, my primary intent in this thesis is to observe a few of the ways in which native Britons interacted with the "Roman cultural

package" as made visible through the material culture of the period. "Visible" is perhaps the key word here, because this requires that native Britons and Roman incomers be made entirely separate from each other, something that may have begun as a fundamental truth of the Roman period, but in later years became blurred. I am fully aware that to attempt a survey of this type plays into binary narratives of "native v. Roman" that have been heavily criticized by scholars throughout the years, but my intent is to show that while this binary certainly exists, it is far more complicated than it seems on the surface, and that, fundamentally, there are no answers to the question of Roman Britain that are wholly easy or true.

When I began researching this topic, my primary intention was to trace the way that the native people of Britain interacted with incoming Roman culture. To this end, I assumed that it would be, if not easy, then at least relatively unproblematic to discern "native" from "Roman." As I discuss in more detail elsewhere in this thesis, this turned out not to be true, especially as evidenced through the material record. Britain attracted incomers from across the empire, all of whom manifested "Romanness" differently, as well as maintaining evidence of their own native cultures, many of which were distinct from each other and from conventional Roman culture. Moreover, the native population of Britain turned out to be far more heterogeneous than I had assumed, with divisions created by geography, tribal units, social class, and gender, among others. The Roman sphere of influence lasted for a significant period of time, stretching out both before and after Roman dominion of Britain; it created a myriad number of different experiences, and for those who lived in this world this resulted in expressions of Roman, British, and Romano-British identity that varied wildly. There was no one true way.

2. Rome in Britain: New Arrivals

Britain was a cul-de-sac of the Roman empire. Though not quite the end of the world – Scotland and Ireland were known and both saw some Roman presence – it was the northernmost point of the empire. As an island, no one had to travel through it to get from one province to another, unlike the oft-traveled Gaul. This held true for trade as well as individuals. Imports of all kinds traveled into Britain, and exports traveled out, but nothing traveled through the province. It was in a very real way the end of the Roman world, and it was treated as such politically, economically, and thematically, going all the way back to its original conquest. Julius Caesar invaded Britain because it was a "show-stealing adventure...he had the time, the army, and the opportunity to invade the end of the world" (de la Bédoyère 2015, 6; Creighton 2000, 128). The same was later true of Claudius. In later years, the emperor Severus conducted campaigns in Britain partially because an embarrassing failure there would not have major repercussions for the rest of the empire, the way they might on other borders – confined by the surrounding ocean, there was little likelihood that if the Roman lines fell, barbarians would come pouring out of barbaricum and into more civilized lands to cast down all that the Romans held dear. Campaigning in Britain would allow his sons Geta and Caracalla to get experience in military and civil affairs, and also created an opportunity for the prestigious conquest of unpacified Scotland, which promptly disintegrated upon Severus's death (Mattingly 2006, 123; de la Bédoyère 2015, 120). Because it was a frontier province which had never been fully conquered, Britain maintained a standing garrison throughout the entire Roman period, at one time the largest in the empire. Yet, despite its reputation

as a cultural icon of nearly mythic proportions, as well as more prosaically a backwater province with little to offer to the empire, it still attracted plenty of continental incomers.

Britain was far from a desired location to travel to, either for pleasure or for business – the writings of Ammianus Marcellinus indicate that prominent Romans were exiled to Britain in the mid and late fourth century, possibly to the Scilly Islands, and other writings often speak disparagingly both of Britain and of its native inhabitants (Mattingly 2006, 456). However, several emperors visited or served in Britain; in the early third century Severus not only traveled to Britain in order to campaign against the Caledonians, but brought with him both his wife Julia Domna and the imperial household. Curiously, the meeting between the Caledonian leaders and the emperor appears to have included both Julia Domna and the unnamed wife of one of the leading Caledonians, Argentocoxus. According to Cassius Dio, Julia Domna remarked on the custom of sharing wives amongst several men – originally referred to by Caesar – and Argentocoxus's wife returned neatly that while Caledonian women enjoyed the finest of the men among their people openly, Roman women committed adultery in secret with the foulest of their men (Dio 77.16.5, de la Bédoyère 2015, 122). Even if apocryphal, it remains one of the few exchanges between a Roman woman of rank – no less than the empress! – and a native woman who must have held significant power herself, if she was not only included at the meeting but was able to speak personally with the empress. She is one of the few individual Britons who appears in either the literary or archaeological records. Apart from those in the first century who were immortalized for their actions either for or against Rome, even British elites are shockingly rare in the historical record. Britain produced no senators and no native governors, either of Britain or of other

provinces; in its nearly four hundred years under Rome it seems not to have produced any indigenous elites of any status higher than equestrian, none of whom were considered to be particularly remarkable in the greater empire. Their significance within Britain itself is equally opaque.

One of the major difficulties in the study of Roman Britain has been in the distinction of Roman incomers from the continent from native Britons who adopted elements of Roman culture. There were certainly many of the former in Britain, identifiable by epigraphic evidence, settlement types, and Roman-style material culture that is unaccompanied by native-associated material culture. Predominantly incomers to Britain were found in urban areas and within and around military sites, though in some cases they are also identified at rural sites. The single greatest concentration of non-Britons in Britain was in the Roman military; although native Britons served in the army, the vast majority of the Roman garrison was made up of men who hailed from across the wide-reaching lands of the Roman Empire. These included soldiers who might appear superficially similar to the men and women of Britain, such as Germans and Gauls, and others from much farther afield who would undoubtedly have been exotic sights on the edge of empire: North Africans, Sarmatians, and Middle Easterners, all of whom are attested to have been in Britain at various points (Eckardt 2010). How much they continued to associate themselves with these ethnic distinctions is debatable; *milites* under the eagle certainly considered themselves to be the epitome of Romanness, as much or more so as senator or city-dweller (James 2014; Ferris 1994).

The Roman military presence in Britain did not consist solely of male soldiers. They were accompanied by wives, camp followers, and slaves, along with the various

suppliers that produced or acquired the necessary accoutrements for a long-scale military occupation. Some of these could come from very far afield indeed, as the so-called Regina tombstone (*RIB* 1065) from South Shields fort on Hadrian's Wall proves. Regina herself was a Briton, a woman from the Catuvellauni tribe in southern England. Her tomb was set up by her husband, a Syrian from Palmyra who named himself as Barates. He was a flag-maker, or perhaps a flag-bearer – although he is best known from his wife's tomb, one which is probably his own survives from Corbridge (*RIB* 1171) – who either accompanied or served the garrison at South Shields. The fort's Roman name was Arbeia, which is sometimes believed to have derived from the Latin *Arabi*, making it similar to modern neighborhoods like Chinatown or Little Italy. If this is true, then it is entirely possible that the fort included a garrison of bargemen from the Tigris (modern Iraq), attested as being in Britain at about this time, but there is no conclusive evidence to this end (de la Bédoyère 2015, 131).

The Regina tombstone is notable not for its artwork (a fairly routine depiction of Regina with the standard iconography of Roman womanhood, though her face has been damaged), or for the appearance of a Catuvellaunian woman so far north of her homeland, or even for the mixing of native British blood with that of a continental immigrant, but because the inscription on the tombstone is bilingual. Barates commissioned the inscription both in Latin, the *lingua franca* of the Roman world, and partially in his native Palmyrene Aramaic. It is also sometimes argued, based on the eastern style of the tombstone, that not only Barates but the sculptor was Palmyrene, perhaps hinting at a small immigrant community on the Tyne. Catherine Johns points out that it is certainly possible that Barates could have written out the inscription for the

sculptor to copy, the art style suggests that both artist and client were of eastern origin (Johns 2003, 22; see also Henig 1995, 117). Barates himself may have been a part of the Roman military as a flag-bearer, rather than merely associated with it as flag-maker (*vex[i]l[l]a[rius]*, RIB 1171), but either way he is far from the common view of the average Roman soldier. The tombstone dates from the early third century, well into the Roman period of Britain; by this time foreigners such as Barates may not have been such a strange sight in Britain, especially in a military zone like Hadrian's Wall and in a port establishment like Arbeia (even more so if the theory about its nomenclature is correct). Relationships such as those between Barates and Regina would have been common, mimicking patterns found all across the Empire as men traveled with the army (either as part of it or in its train) and developed relationships with local women along the way. These relationships would not always have been voluntary.

During the first few centuries of Roman domination in Britain, soldiers were not permitted to marry; however, they were also not expected to be chaste, either. Colonialism, both in the ancient world and in modern imperial regimes, is always associated with sexual domination; this symbolism often featured in official Roman artwork, such as the Aphrodisias relief of Claudius and a personified Britannia, as well as a number of images on the Columns of Marcus Aurelius and Trajan (Rodgers 2003, 85; Ferris 2003; 2009). Rape was a threat to the women of the provinces, especially those in close proximity to concentrations of Roman *milites* (Mattingly 2011, 117). Some soldiers could afford to buy slaves to satisfy their desires; Regina, a freedwoman when she died, may have been one. A second example is that of M. Cocceius Firmus, stationed on the Antonine Wall, who purchased a slave girl with a rather complicated legal history

(Mattingly 2011, 115). Others carried on unofficial marriages, either with local women or with women who had accompanied them from their previous postings; still more undoubtedly contented themselves with prostitutes. While there is no archaeological evidence for brothels in Britain, it seems likely that they would have existed; David Mattingly's estimate twelve to twenty-five thousand enslaved women solely for this purpose over the course of a century seems high but distressingly likely (Mattingly 2011, 116). A whole range of sexual relations between soldiers and civilians can be intuited, ranging from violent rape to consensual cohabitation. Civilian inhabitants of military sites, both the extramural *vici* and within the forts themselves, would have included concubines taken by force, unofficial (and official, for officers) wives, prostitutes, and dependent family members (James 2001, 80). It must have seemed a strange mix to native inhabitants of these regions.

Regina herself, a Catuvellaunian woman from southern England, may well have been just as exotic to the native population around South Shields as her foreign husband. Although a native Briton, her origin was far enough away from her final resting place that there was probably very little crossover in culture between southern and northern British tribes (though there is evidence of some trade between these groups), something that may well have been exacerbated by her association with the Roman military. At a certain point, once the divisions between "us" and "them" are laid down, Catuvellaunian and Palmyrene are equally foreign; the idea of Britain as a complete whole in and of itself is largely an invention of Rome. The fact that Britain was then, and remains today, an island has a tendency to lead modern scholars to look for connections where none may have existed; it is easy to assume that because all these peoples resided in a

geographically small space (especially compared to the rest of the Roman Empire) that they would all have been extremely similar or that they would have considered themselves related peoples. Even elites, usually grouped together as social equals, may not have considered themselves as such; those who dwelled in regions that had exchanged heavy trade with the continent prior to AD 43 had little in common culturally with those in the north and west (Cool 2010, 28). Hella Eckardt points out that "by assuming that such a thing as a single coherent Romano-British material culture existed, we deny the complexities of the archaeological record, and miss out significant sections of this rich resource. Rather, the challenge lies in untangling the multitude of influences and local responses, and exploring the diversity of provincial life" (2014, 27). The arrival of Rome seems to have heightened these differences rather than erased them, creating new ways for the various peoples of Britain to distinguish themselves from one another.

Britain was not conquered in one fell swoop – indeed, parts of it were never conquered at all. Both northern and southern England were well within the Roman sphere of influence for more than a century before Caesar crossed the Channel in 43 BC and were in contact with the continent by the second century AD, though what they gained from this relationship differed (de la Bédoyère 2015, 9; Harding 2004, 24). In later years, as parts of the south were increasingly beginning to resemble the standard set-up of Roman towns and cities across the empire, other parts of the island persisted in much the same way as they had for centuries, with only nominal nods towards the cultural influence of the Roman occupation. In the north, a heavy military presence persisted – at times heavier than anywhere else in the empire. In the fourth century, as

both the western empire and the situation in the north began to unravel, the Romano-British elite were enjoying what Guy de la Bédoyère terms "a high summer" (2015, 160). It is difficult, however, to determine how many of these elite were native British and how many were transplants from elsewhere in the empire.

One of the great difficulties in determining the impact of the Roman conquest and occupation of the provinces is that the more "Romanized" a people become, the less distinct they are from other inhabitants of the Empire, especially since many took on Roman-style names in addition to or rather than retaining their native names. A Roman-style inscription describing an individual with a traditional Latin name, without further distinguishing markers, might as easily describe a transplant from Italy, Gaul, North Africa, or nearly anywhere else in the Empire as well as it might a native Briton. The most reliable way to identify the ethnic origin of an individual is if their birthplace is identified in their epitaph, though this was not as common as one would like, especially in Britain, which has produced fewer inscriptions than other provinces within the empire (Noy 2010, 13). As well, Britain produces far fewer civilian tombstones than might be expected; some 90% of tombstones in Britain are either military or from civilians (like Barates and Regina) associated with the military (Mattingly 2014, 44). Memorialization of the dead in this way does not seem to be a habit picked up by native British populations, while civilian immigrants were less likely to preserve their origins in writing.

In the cases where they are preserved, place of origin might be identified by *natione, natus, domo,* or *ex,* and could refer to cities (*nationi [sic] Tebaeus*), region (*natione Prugia [sic]*), or ethnicity (*natio(ne) Punica*), as identified on a single tomb

from Rome; elsewhere, as with Regina (*natione Catuallauna*), it might be broken down by tribe (AE 1972, 14; Noy 2010, 13). The language of an epitaph can also serve to distinguish an immigrant from a native, though since Latin was the *lingua franca* of the Roman world, its absence is more striking than its presence, especially in a province like Britain which had no native tradition of writing (de la Bédoyère 2015). Native Britons who chose to immortalize themselves in writing would write in Latin. So would many immigrants, no matter their place of origin, though there are exceptions. Soldiers provide the bulk of written material from Britain; despite the fact that they hailed from all over the empire, Latin tended to be the language of choice, though inscriptions like that of Barates' dedication to Regina prove the exception to the rule. Likewise, if a group of people from different origins collaborated, in most cases their language of choice would be Latin (Noy 2010, 15). Some religious cults would use Greek, while Jews might use Hebrew or Aramaic. Especially in a region where the main spoken language – or at least the one identified with the dominant power of the region – was Latin, with all other written languages foreign imports, the choice to use a non-Latin language meant that the inscription likely meant more to the person having it made than it did to passersby. It is likely that there were few people in Britain capable of reading the Palmyrene inscription on Regina's tombstone, for example; she herself may not have been one of them, depending on her level of literacy. Inscriptions serve as a form of presentation and communication; the person who commissioned the inscription (not always the person being commemorated) chose what was and was not worth being represented in this form, and how this was done.

Immigrants are disproportionately represented in Romano-British inscriptions, even in cases where the origin of the author is unclear. Soldiers, also – another kind of immigrant – are also disproportionately represented. Both social groups were far more likely to be literate than the native population, bringing with them Roman traditions of writing and memorializing than had not previously existed in the region (de la Bédoyère 2015, 18). Immigrants – individually or collectively – have a tendency to be more visible in both the archaeological and literary records. There is no preserved literary writing of demonstrably Romano-British origin, though certainly there were British writers. Sometime in the 4th century, the Gallo-Roman poet Ausonius lampooned the British poet Silvius Bonus; we have none of Silvius's writing, but he was mocked for being both a poor poet and a Briton, with what de la Bédoyère calls "a seam of engrained anti-British prejudice" (2015, 157). *Nemo bonus Brito est*, Ausonius declares boldly, and spends six epigrams stubbornly repeating insults that have less to do with Silvius's poetry and more to do with his ethnicity (Ausonius *Epigr.* 107-12; Jones 1996, 154-5). Silvius Bonus serves as a good example of the difficulty of ascertaining native from immigrant – his name is firmly Roman and Latinate; while Ausonius identifies him as a Briton, it is impossible to know if he is a native of that province, descended from immigrants who settled there sometime after the Roman conquest, or an immigrant himself. As none of his poetry survives, it is impossible to tell if he was actually as poor a poet as Ausonius declares or if this was some matter of particular rivalry.

Intrusive materials are easier to identify in the archaeological record than it is to identify native ones, especially in the Roman period, as the former are demonstrably similar across the empire, though often with regional differences that vary in scale.

These can take the form of imported pottery or pottery types made from native clay, art types, animal and plant remains, jewelry and brooch types, and, of course, architectural and memorializing types, as well as numerous other examples (Eckardt 2010; Eckardt et al., 2010). Incomers to Britain hailed from all over the Roman world, from as nearby as Gaul or Germania to as far afield as Africa or the Middle East – Barates, as always, the sterling example of the latter. Skeletal remains from Britain, including the famous Lady of York or Ivory Bangle Lady, can also show the ethnic and racial diversity of the Roman population in Britain by means of DNA analysis, osteological techniques, and strontium and oxygen isotope analysis. The latter can show the place where humans and animals were raised, as isotopic signatures are incorporated into body tissue by ingestion of food and drink, creating characteristics that can be traced back to places via the composition of their groundwater and soil (Eckardt et al. 2010, 112). The Ivory Bangle Lady, for example, was originally discovered in York in 1901, interred in a stone coffin with a number of expensive and exquisite grave goods of both local and foreign manufacture, including British jet and elephant ivory (either from Africa or Asia). She was in her late teens or early twenties when she died in the early fourth century; her grave goods indicate her social class, while an inscription found in her coffin suggest that she may have been a Christian (though this is at odds with the grave goods, which are generally not found in Christian burials). Analysis of her skull has found that she was likely mixed-race of African descent, while strontium and oxygen isotope analysis shows that she was not raised in Yorkshire, but perhaps hailed either from western Britain or elsewhere in Europe. In other words, the Lady of York was a non-native woman of high status who immigrated to Eboracum, a major military and civilian settlement in the fourth century,

and lived there until her death (Leach et al. 2009; Eckardt et al. 2010). Perhaps she came to Britain with a father or husband assigned to the provincial government or military; perhaps she came for other reasons.

New forms of worship are one of the most archaeologically significant imports from Rome to Britain. Much has been written about Romano-British syncretism, the practice of conflating a native and a Roman god who bore similar attributes – Sulis-Minerva, patron of the sacred springs at Bath, is the best known example, but recent scholarship suggests that syncretism may have been less common that previously believed (Mattingly 2011, 231). As well, syncretism or name-pairing was an undeniably colonialist act; it seems to have been practiced by Roman incomers and primarily by the military. The new methods of worship which Rome brought to Britain somewhat blur the question of whether or not natives truly syncretized their gods or if this was a phenomenon practiced purely by Roman incomers. The expression of British gods in classically Roman forms may not be indicative of syncretism; instead, rather, a new means of worship. A number of classically iconographic depictions of gods have been found in southern England, but a lack of inscriptions makes it difficult to see how, or as whom, they were worshipped. In one case, statuettes depicting Minerva are identified as the British goddess Senuna, but without name pairing (Mattingly 2011, 231). Webster, using examples of modern colonial religious appropriation and interplay, suggests that depictions or cooption of Roman (foreign) gods such as these may have been an act of control on the part of British natives, as well as creating a whole new visual language with which to communicate with the divine (Webster 2001; 2003). While the long-held theory that Celtic peoples were aniconic is now being reevaluated, any figural

representations of the divine that predated the coming of Rome were a far cry from those that followed after, as were elaborate temple constructions, which were previously unknown in Britain. The Roman period saw the construction of Romano-Celtic temples similar to those found in Gaul; they include classical architecture but a distinctly unclassical form, and from the lack of inscriptions found there, seem to have been the site for non-Roman types of worship. They are also found primarily at rural rather than urban or military sites, a pattern also seen in Gaul (Mattingly 2011, 228). More traditionally classical temples are typically associated with urban and military sites, as are inscribed altars, a very Roman form of worship (Mattingly 2011, 226). Some aspects of classical Mediterranean interaction with the gods were adapted by the native population; Britain seems to have had a particular fondness for curse tablets (*defixiones*), which are attested to throughout the Mediterranean, but appear in greater numbers and with higher frequency in Britain than anywhere else, all seemingly associated with native worshipers (see below). Something about them seems to have appealed to the temperament of those native to southern England.

Perhaps the most lasting change brought to Britain by the Empire was the importation of certain flora and fauna, many of which remain in Britain to this day. While animals such as fallow deer, pheasants, and European brown hares would originally have been seen as rare and exotic – probably initially kept only by immigrants of status – by the end of the Roman period they would have become commonplace. There are a few records of domestic fowl in the pre-Roman era, but the numbers greatly expand after AD 43 as pheasants and peafowl, amongst others, were brought to Britain. Likewise, fallow deer (*Dama dama*, native to Anatolia) and the brown hare (*Lepus*

europaeus), now common throughout Britain (the fallow deer has the widest distribution of any deer species), were both introduced species, though the exact dates are uncertain. One set of fallow deer remains from Fishbourne Roman Palace has been dated to c. AD 60; strontium isotype analysis shows that it originated not in Britain, but elsewhere in Europe – Italy or southern Gaul seem most likely. Isotype analysis of another set of remains from the same place, dated to about thirty years later, shows that a second deer was born and raised in Fishbourne. This suggests an importation and breeding program, something that has been identified elsewhere in Britain; fallow deer remains from the Isle of Thanet in Kent show a Mediterranean origin (Sykes 2009, 26; 2010; 2014).

As Naomi Sykes points out, exotic imported animals like deer, peafowl, and hares would most likely have been kept in private enclosures or islands like the Isle of Thanet (at the time, a true island). Such practices are attested to elsewhere in the Roman world, specifically in the Mediterranean, though this is the first example discovered in northern Europe (Sykes 2009, 29; 2010). In time, as occurred in the Americas with wild boar, horses, and other imported animals, some of these exotic fauna must have escaped their enclosures and gone feral; it is highly unlikely that they would have been transported long distances only to be immediately released upon arrival in Britain (Sykes 2009, 29). The emparkment of these animals would have served as symbols of status; unlike other domestic animals such as horses, sheep, or goats, fallow deer serve no secondary purposes, as even their antlers are unsuitable for bone working. Their ownership displays nothing but sheer luxury, as their enclosures would involve both constant maintenance and significant space that could not be used for any agricultural purpose.

The coming of Rome had dramatic effects not merely on the people of Britain, but on the landscape itself. The most obvious example would not have been visible to the bulk of the Romano-British population, who simply seldom ventured that far north, but it still stands today as a dramatic show of Roman power in the furthest of its provinces: Hadrian's Wall. It is unique amongst Roman imperial constructions; there is no precedent for it elsewhere in the Roman world (though there are some smaller installations in North Africa that may have served a similar purpose) and even today scholars remain divided on its actual purpose. At the end of its active use in the early fifth century AD, Hadrian's Wall marked the northernmost point of Roman power on the island of Britain, though this was not always true. In the mid-second century, the Antonine Wall – unlike Hadrian's Wall, constructed at the narrowest point of the island – marked the northernmost point, but this was later abandoned and the border moved back to Hadrian's Wall. While today little of the wall remains, it is still a lasting symbol of Roman power – as it would have been in three centuries when it was the largest monument in Roman Britain, and for long afterwards. Adam Rogers points out that "the Wall was imposed on the landscape, and had an impact on people's behaviour and experiences within the landscape" (Rogers 2015, 147). Land that could once have been traveled without interruption was now blocked off; people who wanted to cross from one side of the wall to the other were limited in their routes of passage, which were tightly controlled by the Roman garrisons.

The wall was heavily garrisoned, with a strong military presence in numerous forts and mile-forts along its length, which also meant a massive non-British military presence, largely made up of young foreign men. Accompanying them were the usual

hangers-on that have followed armies throughout history: wives and concubines, merchants, slave-traders, artisans, money-lenders and many others (Mattingly 2006, 108). Communities called *vici* sprang up around some forts, though not all. The military occupation of northern Britain, especially along Hadrian's Wall, continued for the entirety of Roman rule. Under Constantine, mobile field armies were distinct from frontier armies, so in the later part of the third and fourth centuries the British frontier army would have been far more stable than in earlier times, when they might be reassigned elsewhere in the empire at a moment's notice. This led not only to established communities of Romano-British soldiers – how much of the ethnic makeup of the garrison was at this point native British is unknown, but in later years they might well have been indistinguishable from resident civilians – but also the civilian communities around them. Soldiers, and other male incomers, in any foreign land will form relationships (permanent or otherwise) with the native women of that community. In many cases after discharge it would be far easier, perhaps even preferable after twenty some years in the service, to remain in the same area where one served, rather than returning to a distant homeland that might now seem even more alien – thus the number of veteran colonies in Britain and other frontier provinces. Soldiers posted to the frontier would have far more personal and professional connections in the place of their service than they would in their homelands; after retirement, many of them stayed nearby rather than returning home (Collins 2008, 49-50).

While Hadrian's Wall is the only monumental Roman construction in Britain, the Roman occupation had severe effects on the landscape of Britain. In terms of environmental impact, life in Britain continued much as it had prior to AD 43, except

perhaps in scale; land continued to be farmed, woodland continued to be forested, mineral-rich areas continued to be mined. While permanent scars from pit-mining and other productive activities still remain to this day, other regions of Britain with the most fragile habitats like the northern and western mountains and islands remained largely untouched during the Roman period (Schrüfer-Kolb 2007, 134; O'Connor 2010, 6). The four hundred years during which Rome ruled Britain had a lasting impact on the landscape; cities and settlements built where no settlements had existed beforehand created new environments and forms of social interaction, while the establishment of roads reshaped the way in which peoples interacted with the land. Ultimately, however, the greatest effect of Roman rule was felt on the people of Britain, who found themselves living in a world that in some ways was very similar to what it had been in AD 42 and the years prior, and in some ways entirely different.

3. Roman Britain: Edge of the Empire

The Lantern Bearers

The official and generally accepted end of Rome rule in Britain is in AD 410, when Britannia became the first frontier outpost to be abandoned by an increasingly weak Western Roman Empire. Following this, scholars have painted a picture of a Britain fallen into disrepair and darkness, filled with peasants living amongst the scattered remains of once-great villas while monuments of Roman rule crumbled to stone around them. Rome, which ruled Britain for almost four centuries, became nothing more than a passing shadow; in its wake the people whom it had once dominated regressed back to an Iron Age existence of tribes, hill forts, and war bands upon which the inevitable tide of Saxon invasions were able to impress their own shapes. Rome came, it saw, it conquered, and when it departed it left behind nothing of itself but bones; nothing of its own civilization or the political forces it had brought into being by its presence remained.

One of the most striking images from modern literature dealing with the end of Roman rule in Britain comes from the beginning of Rosemary Sutcliff's *The Lantern Bearers*, in which the hero of the book, a young Romano-British legionary, remains behind as the legions are marched onto ships and sailed away from Britain forever to fight the empire's battles elsewhere. In the darkness that follows the first night of Britain abandoned, he climbs to the top of the guard-tower at the fort where he once served and lights the beacon that once signaled Roman protection of the province. For one night more, Rome yet rules in Britain. For one night more, Britain can bask in the illusion of safety that was cruelly stripped aside. For one night more, the dark ages do not yet hold sway.

So-called “dark ages” in history are often named such because there is little archaeological and historical evidence to tell what went on in these periods. The centuries following the end of Roman rule in Britain are one of these dark ages, as there are few historical records of the period, Roman or otherwise, and archaeological evidence is scarce and difficult to date for the late fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries. This is the period of time that is often called sub-Roman Britain – a Britain living in the aftermath of the Roman Empire and relegated once more to the outskirts of known history. Unlike many other provinces of the empire, it was not taken from Rome by force, nor did its people seem to retain any particular sense of Roman identity after it ceased to be Roman. Some population centers remained occupied: some did not. The Latin language ceased to be spoken, nor was it retained in Britain the way that it was in certain other provinces. The gods which Rome had brought to the island were, by and large, forgotten. Roundhouses such as those occupied in the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age (LPRIA) continued to be built and occupied, albeit alongside other, newer building types. *Terra sigillata* or Samian ware, the red-glazed pottery oft used to signify the acceptance of Roman culture, fell out of use and was no longer made, replaced by coarser native pottery.

For all intents and purposes, Britain in the wake of Rome’s departure seemed to have utterly forgotten its presence at all. And yet for four centuries Britain – or at least the southern half of Britain – *was* Roman. It may have been one of the most distant and isolated provinces of the Roman Empire, physically cut off as it was from the remainder of Rome, but nevertheless it bears all the archaeological trappings that signify Roman rule: elite villas, cities and towns with forums and basilica, Roman coins, Samian ware, monuments with Latin inscriptions, and so on. Immigrants from the continent traveled to

Britain and made it their home, either permanently or temporarily; they came in the legions that garrisoned Hadrian's Wall or following them, as merchants hoping for profit, administrators resigned to eking out a few seasons in this rainy, distant land before returning to warmer and more familiar climes, unwillingly in the form of slaves accompanying any of the former – presumably there might also have been immigrants hoping merely to start anew. Individuals are very difficult to track in a purely archaeological record, being largely limited to brief dedications or tomb inscriptions; scripts like the Vindolanda letters or the curse tablets from Bath are able to add a little more personality to what otherwise might be only a catalogue of names and positions (see also de la Bédoyère 2015). Most of these individuals can be more or less firmly identified as being of Roman rather than native origin. This is partially due to the lack of any apparent indigenous tradition of either literacy (the native Celtic language does not seem to have any written form) or recording individuals, traditions that were imported by Rome. The second reason comes from the fact that the vast bulk of British natives, like the vast bulk of any population, are nearly archaeologically invisible.

Roman archaeology and history, and especially those of Roman Britain, is oriented to the study of elites – what Mike McCarthy refers to as a "VIP version of history" (2013, 9). Historical study of any region of conquest is especially biased because the victors write the history – a cliché, but a true one. The little written evidence about Britain is all penned by Roman authors, and even by the standards of classical studies, there is a certain paucity of it. Although Britain is mentioned tangentially in several other texts, the only major text written primarily about it is Tacitus's *Agricola*. Tacitus – Agricola's son-in-law – is far from an unbiased author even by classical

standards, and his writing cannot be accepted uncritically given that he wrote to glorify his father-in-law and criticize the current government (Woolf 2011, 91). Though there is certainly epigraphic evidence from Britain, there is much less of it than there is elsewhere in the empire; for whatever reason, either it did not take hold or the elements of it preserving it were not preserved (Mattingly 2011, 220; Noy 2010). Elites are also far more visible in the archaeological record, either in the form of inscriptions – only the wealthy could afford such – material evidence such as hoards, or buildings and building complexes. Moreover, it is far easier to distinguish dissimilarity rather than similarity in the archaeological record; sites that stand out for one reason or another, either because they can be identified as belonging to either the native elite or to a foreign incomer, are more noticeable and more romantic than those which seem to be more of the same. Another frustrating truth about the rural archaeology of Roman Britain is that it is difficult to identify and date sites that hail from the period between the 2nd and 12th centuries AD, especially in frontier regions like the area on either side of Hadrian's Wall that did not suffer a great deal of dramatic social change (Collins 2012, 114).

Rural continuity seems on the surface to be the only real continuity that was maintained between the Roman period and the sub-Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods; post-Roman urban continuity was nearly nonexistent, save that major sites remained occupied (Mattingly 2006, 533). There are few definitive statements that can be made for Roman Britain as a whole, largely because Britannia, though now generally studied as a whole, did not exist as such in the ancient world. While physically isolated from the continent due to its insular nature, Britain over its years as a Roman province was divided into various administrative configurations, ending in 410 as a diocese that had been

further subdivided into quarters. Prior to the Roman invasion of 43, Britain had been divided into kingdoms and tribal units, though the exact extents of territory are not known; these units are likely to have been retained to a greater or lesser extent throughout the Roman period, given the small number of inscriptions that refer to the native tribes of the person being honored (Noy 2010, 19). These inscriptions are very rare; there are few inscriptions that can be definitely identified with native Britons (as noted above, epigraphy did not seem to be a habit much picked up by the British) and most of them are aligned with the military, suggesting that being memorialized with an ethnic descriptor was a Roman habit (Noy 2010, 20). Given the basic similarity between Iron Age and sub-Roman Britain, it has been argued that many of these tribal units survived intact through the Roman period and into the sub-Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods, though there is no direct evidence to this end, as it would require these units to survive in their LPRIA political configurations for nearly a millennium: highly unlikely (Gerrard 2013, 209-215).

Both in practice and in modern study, Roman Britain can be roughly divided into two halves – the civilian, "Romanized" southern half, within which flourished the typical urban units and elite villas of Roman civilization, and the heavily-garrisoned northern half, which was bounded to the north by Hadrian's Wall. On the other side of the wall lay *barbaricum*, which Rome had tried and failed to conquer on numerous occasions before finally conceding defeat and drawing its forces back to what ultimately became a permanent boundary. Scholars of the past century have tended to divide it into halves or thirds, including Francis Haverfield's "civil " and "military" zones, and more recent divisions into "villa" and "native" landscapes or "military," "civil/urban", and "rural"

communities (Rippon 2013, 130; see also Haverfield 1912, Mattingly 2006). These divisions are not completely false, though Rome itself never divided Britain along such sharp lines; its administrative divisions were, at least early on and in part, formed along tribal lines as had been done in Gaul (Gerrard 2013, 211). There were vast swathes of Britain that are, archaeologically speaking, closer to Roman Gaul or other provinces than they are to other areas of Britain; likewise, in the north, along the *limes* marked by Hadrian's Wall, the Roman military predominated the countryside in a way in which it did not in the south – a distinction again marked within in the archaeology of the region. One of the flaws of this approach for scholars is that it suggests that regions can be marked out in homogeneity in the material culture, despite myriad differences in geography which leads to different ways of living – and in material culture, for that matter. Different areas of Britain, even those whose history and geography are similar, are not always homogeneous in their approach to Roman culture. This is a fact that is oft-overlooked not only by modern scholars – though an appreciation for heterogeneity has been growing over the past two decades – but by Roman writers themselves.

As a frontier province, Britain retained a standing garrison for the entirety of its tenure as part of the Roman Empire – at its peak anywhere from a tenth to an eighth of the entire Roman military, around 50,000 men, as well as the resultant support train (Mattingly 2006, 19; James 2001, 77). For a province that was not particularly wealthy – hardly on the scale of an Egypt or a Hispania – and one which remained far distant from the center (especially as the focus of the empire shifted eastwards), it was an expensive province to retain direct control over. There was a certain amount of prestige associated with the territory; its conquest was, as de la Bédoyère puts it, "a show-stealing adventure"

at the far end of the world (2015, 6). It continued to remain such even centuries after it had been conquered. Ethnographic writing about Britain, well into the Principate, emphasized what Greg Woolf calls its "irreducible barbarity"; due to its remoteness from the imperial core, its isolation, and its romantic history, Britain was cast as "Rome's permanent barbarian theme park" (Woolf 2011, 93-4). Roman authors from Julius Caesar to Cassius Dio, and, most famously, Tacitus, delighted in portraying Britain as the home of savage barbarians who dwell in tents, share their women amongst themselves, and retain primitive superstitions about which animals are taboo to eat. When Dio wrote this, describing the peoples who lived on either side of the Wall, Britain had been under Roman rule for the better part of two centuries; to reach the "wild and waterless mountains and desolate and swampy plains" where these tribes supposedly dwelled, Severus and Julia Domna would have passed through the neat and well-ordered Roman towns of southern England and looked upon the wall itself (Dio 77.12.1-4).

In many ways Rome defined itself by its neighbors, even as some of those neighbors came under its sway and became Roman in their turn. Those who remained outside the Roman borders were well within its sphere of influence; some time after Severus Alexander's victory over the Caledonians but during his reign (AD 222-235), a Caledonian named Lossio Veda traveled to – or possibly through – Colchester and paused to make dedications not only to Mars Medocius but also to the Victory of Severus Alexander (de la Bédoyère 2015, 127). And yet, a century and a half later, a personified Britannia was still "clothed with some Caledonian beast, with iron-painted cheeks," *Caledonio velata monstro, ferro picta genas* (Claud. *Cons. Stil.*2.247-8). Artistic representations of the personified Britannia – like the personifications of other provinces,

always feminine – vary from the submissive to the subdued, always in contrast to Rome (Rodgers 2003, 87). The most striking of these is undoubtedly the first century AD relief from Aphrodisias of Claudius and Britannia. The emperor – heroically nude except for a cloak and helmet – kneels calmly on top of a struggling Britannia, whose torn gown has slipped to reveal a breast in the traditional classical metaphor for rape. He grips her hair with one hand, while the other is upraised; the relief is too damaged to know whether it was empty or if he held a weapon. While the portrayal of personifications was a common motif in classical art and literature, few other representations are as disturbing to modern eyes – and perhaps to contemporary ones – as the Aphrodisias relief. Centuries separate these artistic and literary depictions, and yet the overriding Roman image of Britain barely changes. Between Claudius and Claudian, Britain remains irredeemably barbarian – "a distant land of horrors and marvels," still clothed in skins and paint after more than three hundred years under Roman rule (Woolf 2011, 93).

Certain aspects of this remain in modern scholarship. The three hundred odd years in which Britain was officially under Roman control – from AD 43 to AD 410 – is often called "the Roman occupation of Britain." Other writers refer to it as "the Roman period" or simply as "Roman Britain"; Guy de la Bédoyère, choosing the latter, describes "Roman Britain" as "the label we apply to several centuries during which the most conspicuous forms of cultural expression were derived, all or in part, from the classical world of Rome and other peoples in its orbit" (2015, ix). David Mattingly chooses the first and writes, in his book of the same name, of an "imperial possession during nearly four centuries of foreign domination" (2006, 3). John Creighton, in contrast to the popular view, suggests that Britain was already essentially Roman even before AD 43;

Claudius's "annexation" only formalized what had already been true (2006). The traditional scholarly narrative, however, is one of domination and conquest. Britain was hardly the only province of Rome to be conquered by military force; scholars of imperialism and resistance in other provinces (a popular field at present) have proved that it was not unique in needing to be maintained by such either.

Part of this must come from the history of Romano-British studies, especially over the past century and a half. The study of Roman Britain is, understandably, largely undertaken by British scholars – in a way it has become local history practiced by local historians, albeit those separated by their subject matter by two millennia. During its own tenure as an imperial power, the British Empire considered itself the heir of Rome, as did many of its contemporaries (Mattingly 2011). However, while France and Italy walked in the footsteps of Rome in North Africa, seeing the monuments of Roman officials as signposts for their own rule, the British Empire trod lands upon which Caesar and his successors had never stood. Classical studies was the subject of choice for numerous governors of India; scholars used their own understanding of India and other British colonies as a lens through which to view the Roman occupation of Britain. Rome, as far as they were concerned, had passed civilization onto Britain so that Britain, centuries later, could pass that same civilization onto the rest of the world (Hingley 2000; 2008). British classical studies was at its fore in the same historical context in which Rudyard Kipling penned the phrase "white man's burden."

Thus, then, the disciplinary confusion over the Roman period in Britain. Was it a period of prosperity and growth for Britain, bringing the inhabitants of Britain into the wider world of the Roman empire and introducing to the benighted barbarian the central

tenets of civilization – whether those be variously called *humanitas, paideia,* or *Romanitas*? Or was it a period of brutal, violent oppression, where the native population was trodden down by vile foreign conquerors maintaining their rule by the sword and systematically eliminating any hint of native culture? Further confusing the matter is the apparent collapse of Roman civilization in Britain within a century of Rome's departure. As the sun set on the 4th century AD, Britain – at least in the south and east – was still a land organized around villas, cities, and towns; by the end of the 5th century it seemed to have stepped back in time to the last millennium. In this light Rome seems little more than a passing shadow, albeit one that left behind the detritus of his passage. Which of these seemingly contradictory narratives is the true one?

The ultimate answer is, of course, a little of all. Just as Woolf wrote of Gaul, Britain too is a Roman artifact, shaped by Roman power as well as by its own people and geography (Woolf 1998, 54). How deep the Roman influence went, and how greatly it was embraced, discarded, manifested, or altered by native Britons, varied from region to region. Yet, ultimately, it was there. Like other provinces in the Empire, Britannia produced citizens, soldiers, poets, art for display, and goods for export. No single event shaped it or marked the trajectory of its future; the formation of Roman Britain, and of the Romano-British people, was a series of processes and choices carried out over centuries and manifested in various ways, some of which are preserved and thus visibly archaeologically, and others of which can only be guessed at.

Sphere of Influence: Britain before Rome

From a certain point of view, Britain itself was a creation of Rome. The "idea of Britain," as Martin Millett puts it, was a concept which had meaning only to those outside the island – to the Greeks and Romans who wrote about it. Britons themselves had little concept of being a part of any greater whole; their major distinctions and facets of identity were within their tribal groups, the Roman-named *civitates* (Millett 2002, 141). As they were able to do on the continent, Rome was able to exploit these groups for its own purposes, dealing with various rulers in the years between Caesar's invasion of 55-54 BC and the Claudian one in AD 43, as well as for a time afterwards. These groups also experienced the spread of Rome differently; their participation, first on the outskirts of the empire, then later within its borders, varied drastically based on their own geographic location, as well as within the societies themselves.

As early as the 2nd century BC parts of Britain were in contact with Rome – or rather, in contact with peoples who were in contact with Rome. This is evident archaeologically in ceramics from the period, which primarily take the form of amphorae used to transport goods such as wine, olive oil, and other perishables from Gaul, Italy, and the Mediterranean (Timby 2013, 155). At the same time, around the 1st century BC, new vessel forms appear in Britain; drinking assemblages for the consumption of wine as well as preparation and serving dishes for food. Most of these are of Gallo-Belgic origin, combining Roman and native pottery forms (largely evident in cups and platters; butt beakers may be of Roman origin, but may also have developed independently), with the advances made possible by new technology. Although the dating of British adaptations of these forms is under debate – the traditional narrative is that copying these forms did

not begin until after the Roman occupation – Jane Timby argues that it actually began concurrent with the Gallo-Belgic imports. These British forms appear in southern and eastern England, in the same regions that later become the home of the British pottery industry – Severn Valley ware, Savernake ware, the Alice Holt industry, and black-burnished ware. It is difficult to decisively date pottery, but in several cases examples have been found with datable pre-conquest imports; Timby argues that due to the range these products were found at, production must have begun much earlier than the conquest (Timby 2013). Some may also have been the products of immigrant potters who moved to Britain from Gaul, though it is difficult to prove this; new ceramic forms are often associated with immigrants, though there is seldom any other evidence to support this (Eckardt et al. 2010, 101; Fulford 2010, 70). Whether these tablewares and drinking assemblages were being used in the same way that they may have been in Gaul or Italy is unknown; the transport amphorae indicate that wine and other imported foodstuffs were available, but that does not lead to a widespread change in eating habits, especially since imported foodstuffs were likely to be the province of the elite.

At about the same time that these imports were flourishing, the latter half of the 1st century BC, Gallo-Latin and Roman letters begin to appear on British coins. Uninscribed coins had been produced from the late 2nd century onwards, but it was only after the Roman conquest of Gaul that inscribed coins have been found. British coin types from this period show continental influence, some, but not entirely, Roman; many have design lineages that can be traced back through Gallic coins to Mediterranean originals (Creighton 2000). In the late 1st century BC, a number of coins take on a heretofore unknown type of inscription, what Jonathan Williams calls “cartouche-style.”

These display the name of the ruler, usually in the nominative but sometimes in the genitive, within a cartouche or tablet, either plain or with other decorations. This is a style that does not originate from continental coins and does not appear elsewhere, and so initially seems to be entirely indigenous in origin. However, while these inscriptions do not resemble continental or Roman coin styles, they do have a continental Roman origin: the cartouche-style inscriptions are nearly identical to the manufacturer's stamps found on imported amphorae and ceramic fineware, which began to enter Britain at about the same time as the earliest rulers inscribed on the coins (Williams 2002, 143). Cartouche-style coins appear in the same geographical areas in which these imported ceramics were found, strengthening the connection between the imported ceramics and the coins (Williams 2002).

It is occasionally suggested that the spread of Roman products into frontier regions – which at this point Britain would have been – was a sort of "advance guard" of Roman cultural transformation, a soft preparation of areas ripe for conquest so that upon the coming of the Roman armies there would be less local resistance. This is unlikely, as Roman artifacts have been found in areas in which Rome had no intention of conquering – some as far afield as India and Scandinavia, well beyond the reach of even Rome's ferocious armies (Tomber 2013; Wicker 2013). Elsewhere in Britain, regions that were not part of the initial wave of conquest were also in communication with the continent; Gaulish and Corieltauvian coins appear in equal numbers in Brigantian (northern England) territory, suggesting direct trade with the continent rather than trickle-down from trade with other British tribes (Hardin 2004, 25). Given the difficulty in dating many materials, it becomes problematic when looking at artifacts in regions that later

came under Roman rule, as southern England did; looking further afield to areas that remained firmly beyond the frontier allows the same conceptual basis for pre-Roman frontier areas.

The examples used here relate entirely to trade; at this point there were no Britons serving as auxiliaries in Rome's armies, as would become common in later centuries, and geographical isolation makes it unlikely that they were gathered during raids on Roman territories (Wells 2013a). "Friendly kingdoms" in eastern England were responsible for most of Rome's contact with Britain; John Creighton suggests that it may have been possible that to this end there may have been Roman auxiliaries serving in Britain prior to AD 43, though this is based more on speculation than on evidence (2001). What is clear is that most Roman – or Gallo-Roman – goods in Britain in the late first century BC and early first century AD were limited to the elite, and were used not as part of a "Roman cultural milieu," but in culturally British ways that emphasized the exotic foreign nature of these items as a method of displaying and retaining status (Mattingly 2006, 79, 84). With possession and display came access, a type of power in and of itself; some peoples had it and others did not; it allowed for further societal differentiation. This worked both vertically (within a single tribe or kingdom) and horizontally (across multiple kingdoms), allowing increased differences in identities (Mattingly 2006, 84; Hunter 2013, 17). Rather than acculturating the peoples who traded on these items to Roman culture, they instead served as an alternative form to display their own cultures in distinctive ways, often melding Roman forms or technology with indigenous designs and uses (Mattingly 2014, 41; Hunter 2013; Williams 2002). Despite the fact that Rome had come to their

shores in the form of pottery, coins, and foodstuffs, they still remained firmly British – for whatever value that might hold.

A New Dawn: the 1st and 2nd centuries AD

The initial Roman conquest is likely to have had little impact on the vast majority of the British population. Certainly fighting would have violently impacted the lives of those in its path; the Roman army was nothing if not a collection of brutal men, and Tacitus, for all his faults as a narrator, makes it clear that non-combatants suffered horrifically under the onslaught of the Roman army. Rome maintained a military presence throughout its entire tenure in Britain; how much impact that presence had on the province as a *whole*, rather than merely on the areas around Hadrian's Wall, forts, and *coloniae,* is debatable. Archaeologically neither the conquest nor the Boudiccan revolt are particularly evident; the routes which the army traveled can mostly be tracked, and there are levels of destruction at some sites that can be associated with the Boudiccan revolt (McCarthy 2013, 59). Within the first few decades after the conquest the trauma associated with the Roman army must have been immense for all levels of society, leading to the roiling resentment that eventually erupted into the Boudiccan revolt. Creighton's assertion that the conquest was nothing more than an annexation of already essentially Roman territory seems naïve at best (Creighton 2000; 2006).

As mentioned in the previous section, one of the major problems in dealing with the archaeology of Britain in the first centuries BC and AD is that individual sites can be very difficult to date. The presence of items associated with Rome, such as Roman-style pottery or glass, often leads archaeologists to date a site to the Roman period, but the bulk

of these finds appear in the same areas that traded with the continent prior to AD 43 and were in circulation earlier (Harding 2004, 50). This is especially problematic in rural areas, which often lack the easily datable finds or architectural materials that are found in urban settings or sites that are associated with elites. The rural population of Britain made up more than ninety percent of the province and yet – as with peasants throughout history – come close to being archaeologically invisible. And yet they too were Roman Britain, at least as much as the elites that will be discussed later in this section. To get the best idea of how deeply the Roman influence penetrated into British society, it is best to start with the bulk of Romano-Britons: the rural population who, unless they were either very lucky or very unlucky, had little to no contact with either the Roman or British elite (Millett 2002, 139).

There was a great deal of continuity of tradition between LPRIA Britain and Roman Britain, especially for rural sites, adding to the confusion of dating sites. Areas that had strong pottery traditions prior to the conquest in the south and east of Britain, either handmade indigenous forms or wheel-thrown Gallo-Roman ones, continued to operate in the same way; areas that had been largely aceramic prior to the conquest remained so. This did not change over the entire Roman period; to take two examples, handmade East Yorkshire Calcite Gritted wares and Black Burnished ware 1 (BB1), indigenous traditions, both lasted from the pre-conquest period to the 5th century (Evans 2013, 427-9). This is not because of lack of availability of alternative Roman-style wares; small amounts of imported Samian ware has been found on some 90% of all rural sites in Roman Britain, so the option to use it was there. Instead it seems to have been a matter of preference. H.E.M. Cool suggests that rural consumers may have been more

conservative than urban consumers, which may well be a major factor (Evans 2013, 430; Cool 2004, 29). The peoples using these ceramics likely remained essentially consistent over those four centuries, as military veterans or new arrivals from the continent brought their own ceramic traditions with them, and sometimes even their own potters (Fulford 2010, 71; Eckardt et al. 2010, 101).

Prior to the coming of Rome, there were no urban or even pre-urban sites in Britain; society was predominantly rurally-based, consisting primarily of enclosed and unenclosed settlements centered around farmsteads and occasionally hill forts; nucleated and more complex settlements were unknown (Taylor 2001, 46; Taylor 2006, 19). Settlements of various sizes and types existed in Britain – more so in southern and eastern Britain, where there are distinct kingdoms or tribal groups with central leadership (noted both by Roman historians and on coins), than in the north and west. Although Roman writers conceived of northern tribal groups like the Brigantes and the Picti, there is little archaeological evidence of this; D.W. Harding suggests that there may have been little centralization of social unity aside and that kinship ties may have been the greatest connection (Harding 2004, 294). This would change somewhat over the course of the Roman period, but not to any great extent.

In the south, the majority of Britain remained farms and small hamlets, little different from what had come before (Taylor 2007, 109). This is where perhaps 90% of the population lived over the course of Rome's four centuries; it is also likely that nearly the entirety of this 90% were native Britons. What Rome introduced to Britain was the concept of both the town and the city, neither of which had existed previously. Some of these new settlements were built over or around pre-existing native sites; others seem to

spring out of previously unoccupied territory. Towns were, as S. Willis puts it, "a defining feature of the Roman episode in north-west Europe; towns in this region (Gaul, Germany and Britain) differed from anything that had existed before, or what was to exist subsequently" (2007, 143). Scholars have categorized them in several different ways, most depending on their legal status under Roman law, but others artificial distinctions created by Roman scholars – *municipia, coloniae, canabae* or *vici, civitas* centers, and that peculiar Romano-British institution that appears in the 3rd century, the so-called "small town," which will be discussed later. Roman towns in Britain were a distinctly Mediterranean phenomenon that held certain political, social, economic, and religious roles; both prior to and during the Roman period these roles were often filled by alternate centers (Willis 2007, 147). They were also, because of their intrusive rather than indigenous structure, political statements; even those which were built over *oppida* sites were not neutral structures.

Entirely new social centers appeared in Britain during the Roman period. Prior to the coming of Rome, nucleated settlements and centers of tribal power (*oppida*) existed, but in a much smaller and less developed form than anything found in the Mediterranean, where the city had for many centuries been the center of civilized life. Their development in Britain led to new ways of organizing daily life and behavior, as well as new forms of supply and demand, power and display thereof, material culture, and architecture. They could also have drastic repercussions for the economy of a province, both positive and negative; while cities are hubs of trade and include productive sites of certain types, they are reliant on the existence of an agricultural surplus that can only be produced elsewhere (though some urban gardens have been found). This leads to villa

clusters around city sites, as well as towns organized along roads to make supply and trade as easy and efficient as possible (Morley 2011; Wilson 2011).

Roads, another new import to Britain, served to connect these population clusters, and new settlements developed alongside them. While transportation routes must have existed prior to the coming of Rome, they were only dirt tracks, probably unmarked and unpassable in poor weather; they did not have any lasting impact on the British landscape despite the fact that they must have continued to be used by some even after AD 43 (Reece 1999, 79; Davies 2008, 26). Rome's roads were something else entirely. Originally serving as routes of passage for the military, they were also used by civilians; their convenience led to the development of settlements alongside them – settlements that seem to be occupied by native Britons, rather than incomers, and which had a rural character consistent with other native sites (Willis 2007, 162). Their use continued into the Anglo-Saxon period and into the modern day, so many Roman roads are still preserved, unlike the anonymous tracks which came before. The establishment of roads, bridges, canals, and new settlements would have drastically changed the nature of the land itself, especially the experience of moving through it. Milestones, which showed distance, also included the name of the emperor; stationed as they were alongside roads they would have served as prominent pieces of Roman propaganda. Roads were built over former settlements; fields were changed to follow the line of the road; they had lasting effects on the land for miles around them. Control of the physical environment of Britain in such a way was an imperialist and non-neutral act, demonstrating the physical power of Rome; it brought even the land under its sway (Rogers 2015, 154; Mattingly 2006, 366; Davies 2008, 30).

Street grids and monumental architecture were imports to Britain along with cities, roads, and towns; this has led to a tendency in the study of urban growth in the Roman empire to concentrate on the basic similarities between sites, since they often had very distinct forms – more so in Britain than in other parts of the empire, since there were no preexisting urban types (Bowden 2013, 47). Conformity is "Roman" or "Romanizing," while deviation is "native" or "evidence of resistance." Neither binary is particularly good at addressing either the individuality of sites or of their resident, though over the past few years this has begun to change. One of the major subjects of study in urban archaeology is which sites were occupied prior to the coming of Rome, and which were built wholemeal by incomers. Major urban sites that fit into the latter category include London and York, still major cities in Britain; both seem to have built on unoccupied land, though York previously been a military fort (Creighton 2006, 93; Ottaway 1999, 138). It is likely that these sites, at least initially, had a larger population of non-native residents than those built over preexisting settlements. Roman-style towns built over pre-Roman settlements were also common, though often are harder to identify. Tacitus in the *Annales* claims that the reason for the establishment of the *colonia* Camulodunum (Colchester) was twofold: first to guard against native rebellion, and second to provide an example of civilization for native residents (Tac. *Ann.* 12.32). This may explain the presence of some Roman towns and *coloniae* near, if not precisely on top of it, native settlements (Hurst 1999, 119). Site placement may originally have had a military purpose, but after the army had moved northwards it would still allow Roman authorities to, as Hurst puts it, "manipulate social relations" (Hassall and Hurst 1999,

186). Despite the frequency with which they appear in Britain, however, the bulk of the British population still would have dwelled outside them in rural areas.

Urban sites had a significantly higher proportion of non-native British residents than rural sites did, for the obvious reason that British farmland held few attractions for non-elite immigrants. The organizational structure of the Roman town would have been immediately familiar to continental immigrants, who seem to have continued to organize their new lives in much the same way that they had their old ones, in some cases perhaps forming distinct communities within the larger township (Mattingly 2011, 220). Despite de la Bédoyère's assertion that there is no evidence that native Britons were ever incorporated into these towns, it is foolish to assume that they would not have been present in some form; doing so strays worryingly close to Victorian conceptions of Roman Britain as isolated islands of Roman civilization surrounded by an ocean of barbarian Celts (de la Bédoyère 2015, 53; Hingley 2000, 160). Foreigners in Britain are dealt with in in the previous chapter, but it is absurd to believe that they were the only urban residents in Britain. Identifying native occupation of sites which are foreign in form, as well as often foreign in origin, is easier said than done, however.

The most straightforward way to prove ethnicity is by an inscription – ideally, one which states the name, birthplace, and filiation (Noy 2010, 13). These are not common in Britain. In fact, when they do appear, they are almost exclusively associated with immigrants, though there are a handful of exceptions. Inscriptions which do not mention birthplace are more common, but the problem here comes with the fact that many people who wanted to compete on a social scale beyond that of the region took Latin names,

leaving their native origin archaeologically invisible. De la Bédoyère calls this the Roman paradox:

> In the Roman world it was possible for an individual to become so subsumed into Roman culture, at least insofar as that person is manifested to us, that his or her origins disappeared, yet by virtue of being Romanized he or she had a far better chance of appearing in the accessible record and of belonging to a broadly similar culture (2015, xv).

In other words, because native Britons took on aspects of Roman culture, it is often difficult, if not impossible, to tell a native from an immigrant in the archaeological record. The clearest ways in which this would have been evident are ways nearly impossible to preserve in the archaeological record.

What language residents of Roman Britain might have spoken is a major question. As elsewhere in the western empire, Latin was the language of discourse, government, and trade; people who wanted to interact or compete on a level with incomers to Britain had to learn it. Those who would be primarily affected by having to operate in the language of the conqueror would have been native elites and merchants; more isolated groups would have no pressing reason to learn a language that they might hear only a few times a year. Prior to the coming of Rome, knowledge of Latin would have served as a sort of prestige good among the elites, but most Britons would have had no reason to learn it. The British language, and what were almost certainly extremely regionalized dialects, stems from the Celtic language group and is generally catalogued as Brithonic (P-Celtic) in most of England and Goidelic (Q-Celtic) in Ireland and some parts of western Scotland (Mattingly 2006, 52; Creighton 2000, 150). There was no written form,

though it is possible that a number of legible but otherwise indecipherable curse tablets from Bath are written in Celtic transliterated into Latin letters (Tomlin 2002, 174).

The Bath tablets (*defixiones*) from the temple of Sulis-Minerva present a fairly decent cross-section of native society in the *civitas* of the Dobunni. Along with curse tablets discovered in London and Uley, they represent classes of native British society that would otherwise go unpreserved over a span of several hundred years. While they begin in the late first century, though most date from the late second and third centuries (Hanson and Connolly 2002, 153; Tomlin 2002, 106). None of the tablets from Bath or Uley preserve the three names of a Roman citizen (though some from London do, those named are the targets, not the authors), and there are more Celtic names than Latin ones; the ratio at Bath is 80:70, while those recovered from the temple of Mercury at Uley are 15:13. A number of Latin *cognomina* also seem to preserve Celtic names, making the proportion higher than it originally seems (Tomlin 2002, 171; Mattingly 2011, 230). Handwriting analysis suggests that most of the tablets were written by different hands, rather than by hired scribes; some of them are clumsy enough that the authors may have been only semi-literate, while a few preserve "pseudo-writing," and may have been inscribed by illiterate petitioners (Tomlin 2002, 171). Others, however, are written in fluent Latin that also suggests a spoken understanding, rather than merely a literate one, with some Celtic influences in vowels and consonants that may be hints of bilingualism or the British dialect of the language (Hanson and Connolly 2002, 153; de la Bédoyère 2015, 116). One tablet from Uley was Latin written in Greek characters, a rare example of the Greek alphabet used in Britain, though not the only occasion on which Greek is used to transliterate a Celtic language if Caesar is to be believed (Tomlin 2002, 175;

Caes. *Gal*. 6.14.4). The spectrum of literacy on the tablets indicates that, at least in the south, fluent Latin was common along the native social scale, rather than merely being the province of the elite. While curse tablets are known throughout the empire and seem to have a Mediterranean origin, they are found in greater numbers in Britain than anywhere else and are almost exclusively civilian, with only one example from a military site (Mattingly 2006, 311. They seem to appeal to the British temperament in a way unprecedented elsewhere in the empire.

Written evidence, especially for natives, is scarce in Britain – more so than anywhere else in the empire. However, much of it has been carefully recorded by archaeologists and antiquarians over the past few centuries, and new finds are published annually in the journal *Britannia*, as well as catalogued in *Roman Inscriptions of Britain*. The Bath and Uley curse tablets represent a certain context and give voice to the otherwise voiceless, albeit in a limited way because of their precise nature. Further north on Hadrian's Wall, the Vindolanda tablets add another personal touch to the inhabitants of Roman Britain, but they are largely written by and addressed to non-natives; only in a few cases do they refer to Britons. There is a small amount of written evidence dating from the Roman tenure in London, mostly on ceramics or metalwork as well as religious dedications and monumental inscriptions, but also a small number of stylus tablets that preserve writing. Mostly this is in Latin; there are some examples in Greek, as well as the famous Palmyrene of the Regina tombstone at South Shields. The latter definitively can be identified with non-native Britons; epigraphy in Latin is less certain. One 2nd century example from London includes a Gaulish regionalism regarding a unit of land measurement: *cum ventum esset in rem praesentem, silvam Verlucionum,* ***arepennia***

decem quinque (Adams 2003, 456; Burnham et al. 1994, 303, no. 34). **Arependis* seems to have entered Latin from Gaul and is attested to in other Celtic-speaking regions; its use in Britain may indicate that it was a native word there as well as in Gaul, or that it arrived with Gallic immigrants, of which there were a number. While some graffiti is also preserved, it mostly consists of personal names.

Aside from written evidence, other signs of literacy in Britain come from objects associated with writing: styli, tablets, wax spatulae (used for smoothing out the wax in tablets), inkwells, pens, and signet rings all serve as such. The most common writing instrument associated with the Romans is the stylus and tablet, but ink was also used; it is ink writing that is preserved at Vindolanda, and inkwells, pens, and carrying cases for inkwells and pens have been found elsewhere. Of these, only signet rings and inkwells (and possibly wax spatulae) were used as evidence of social status; to this end, they are occasionally found as part of the burial assemblages of elites (Eckardt 2014, 206; Tomlin 2011). All of these can be found in a surprisingly wide array across Britain – not just in urban sites and villas, where they are expected, but also on rural and lower-status settlements, including hilltop settlements and native farmsteads (Hanson and Connolly 2002, 156). This suggests that literacy may have been widespread across Britain, though what was being written on isolated farmsteads, heated villas, and busy merchant centers is highly debatable and, barring an archaeological miracle, impossible to discover. The few examples which have been found are mostly related to economy – bills of sale for land and property, including slaves (Adams 2003, 456; Tomlin 2011, 133).

Urban sites are also more diverse and cosmopolitan than rural sites, which may be partially a matter of availability and partially one of tastes. Many objects found

frequently in cities and towns are also found in small but widespread distributions across Britain, suggesting that their lack of use in rural sites was not due to difficulty in getting a hold of it, but rather preference. Zooarchaeology here provides an interesting example, since Rome brought new animals and types of food consumption to Britain. Concentrated remains of sand eels and clupeids (small fish from the herring family) have been found in Lincoln and York; it is possible that they represent production sites of garum or allec, two fermented fish products much beloved of Roman palates, which would be evidence of local production rather than importation (Dobney et al. 1999, 25). They may also merely represent waste sites from normal fishing practice, rather than deliberate production; the evidence is unclear. If they are representative of production, it suggests that Britons may have developed a taste for garum; a second explanation may be that interprovincial trade had slowed down or ceased significantly and the empty hole in the market was being filled.

Certain animals that were commonly consumed by Romans were taboo in Britain, though they were still bred for pleasure; Caesar names the hare, goose, and cockerel as included in this category (*BG* 5.12). All were consumed in the Roman world, with hare a particular delicacy and emparked in *leporaria* by wealthy Romans to this end. Nina Crummy's survey of hare bones found at Iron Age sites bears this out, as only 26% of sites produced any bones, and the majority of those proved to be remains from only one or two individuals. The exception is from the pre-conquest site at Fishbourne palace, found in a ditch alongside a number of remains that all seem to be from one feast; all (the assemblage also includes domestic pig, deer, fish, and wild birds) are extremely high-status, especially when put together, and not typical of the Iron Age (Crummy 2013,

114). Following the conquest there was a slow rise in hare consumption; further surveys indicate that it was still rare at rural sites and in small towns, but do consistently appear at large towns, villas, and military sites (Crummy 2013). Given the likely population breakdowns of these settlements, it seems very likely that hare remained taboo – or at least not commonly eaten – for Britons, but was a popular food source for both non-native Britons and Britons with high-status diets. There is also some evidence of *leporaria* at two villa sites and as a source of supply for large towns.

Slowly and at times haltingly over the course of its first two centuries as part of the Roman Empire, Britain became Roman – or at least took on cultural aspects associated with Rome, though this was a constant process and one that had different meanings for different levels of society and in different parts of the island. There is a propensity in the study of Roman Britain to identify sites with a paucity of material strongly associated with Rome (samian ware is a common example) as "resistant," invoking a conscious choice to ignore or avoid Roman material (Webster 2001, 217). To some extent this seems to be true, given the strong split in material discovered on urban and rural sites. It is the *why* of this split that is important – Romans and aspiring Romans versus natives, as Webster criticizes (2001, 217)? The negotiation of discrepant identities, as per Mattingly (2011, 213)? The participation in a cultural system and the process of "becoming Roman," a term coined by Woolf (1998, 242)? In all likelihood, it was a little of all of these. Different individuals would have adapted, adopted, or ignored many aspects of the Roman cultural package as temperament and opportunity allowed for. The vast majority of the British population, especially during the first two centuries of the new millennium, would not have been in a position to consciously pursue

"Roman" as a mark of status. New ceramic technology would have had little meaning to populations that didn't use many ceramics anyway, while a suggestion to eat an animal regarded as taboo would likely have been met with horror or blank stares. (How many Americans, for example, would consider eating dog or horse, despite the fact that both are common food sources in other cultures?) There was no preexisting "British" identity; rather, a collection of different communities and diverse identities. "Roman" would not step easily into a conception of the world that did not previously exist.

One of the faults of this paper is that it also falls into trap of embracing the binary divisions that have for so long dominated the study of ancient Rome – "native" and "Roman," "rural" and "urban," being the two most prominent that have appeared here. While there have been many arguments criticizing these divisions, it not only seems disingenuous but impossible to try and strip them entirely from any study of Britain concentrating on the effect that Rome had on the native inhabitants of the island. There were outsiders arriving from the continent; there were residents who had been living in Britain before the coming of Rome. Certainly as the years passed these divisions began to blur, but epigraphic and archaeological evidence does seem to indicate that there continued to be a split between these populations.

The same is also true for the urban/rural divide. Urban spaces existed, as did rural ones. Military spaces, including forts and *vici*, as well as small towns, blur this binary division, as does the existence of villas as opposed to non-villa estates. Many authors have written before of the traps often created by breaking Roman social and architectural structures down by precise names and definitions. Some of these terms, such as *municipium* and *colonia*, were used by Roman authors and served as legal categories.

Others were used by Roman authors, but perhaps not in the same way in which they are used by scholars today; *villa* and *vicus* both fit into this category. Still more are inventions of modern scholarship, like *civitas* capital and the Britain-specific "small town" (Rodgers 2015, 51). The use of these terms can lead scholars into the trap of assuming that all are broadly similar, something that has been addressed earlier in this paper. However, despite their problematic nature – especially for categories that are very broad, like villa and small town, and which operated in ways that we are still not entirely aware of – there is still a need for a common language in Roman scholarship. After several centuries of study, there is no easy way to discard these terms; they are as rooted in the field as the eminently problematic "Romanization," and as difficult to replace. Rather than debating their appropriateness when no viable alternative will ever be offered for the field, scholars should emphasize mindfulness – something that seems to be demonstrably present in recent scholarship, as authors increasingly demonstrate the differences between individual settlements and the way their populations interacted with each other and the landscape.

The Golden Age: the 3rd and 4th centuries AD

By the third century, Britain had been part of the Roman Empire for the better part of two centuries; the conquest was well out of living memory of all and many of the island's inhabitants had spent their entire lives under the rule of Rome. Many – not all. Up on the northern frontier, the border continued to fluctuate, so parts of Scotland were at times under Roman rule and at other times *barbaricum*. Most of the northern regions of the island had never been conquered at all, though even these were still well within the

Roman sphere of influence. The Severan war of conquest in the north brought trade and soldiers both to Britain, as well as the imperial family itself; this fighting does not seem to have had any major effects on southern Britain, carried out as it was leagues away. In AD 225, the so-called Third Century Crisis began on the continent, embroiling the empire in chaos for the next few decades. While Britain was not untouched by this, it experienced less physical trauma than the continent, which Scott has theorized may have been responsible for the expansion of elaborate villas in the late third century, significantly earlier than in other provinces (2004, 47).

So far villas have only been touched on in passing. There is perhaps no more archetypal Roman settlement type than the villa, especially within a provincial rural landscape. I say "settlement type" rather than "building," as villas in Britain were productive estates that served as homes to many besides immediate family and household slaves. In Britain they are often contrasted with the native roundhouse. Archaeological definitions of the villa differ from region to region; in Italy they are primarily luxury estates with productive aspects, but in Britain the definition is extended to any rural building (they almost always appear with ancillary structures) that is primarily Roman in architectural form, even if their ancillary structures are entirely British in form (Mattingly 2006, 370; Gerrard 2013, 135). This creates a wide variance within the category, with the result being that villas vary widely in form across Britain, from the palace at Fishbourne (usually identified with Togidubnus) to the small farms scratched out in the north. Although a handful of villas were built in the first century, including Fishbourne (which may predate the conquest), the bulk of villas in Britain were constructed in the third and fourth centuries.

Romano-British villas are always rectilinear buildings, distinguishable from native forms because the primary architectural shape of LPRIA Britain is circular. This has led to the common contrast of the native roundhouse (nearly ubiquitous across Britain) with the imported villa; the natural thought progression is the assumption that a rectilinear villa is an indication of the practice of Roman cultural norms, while a roundhouse is evidence of native resistance. (Though there are also some pre-Roman traditions of rectilinear buildings.) The slow development of villas in Britain, however, as well as excavations carried out at numerous villa sites, suggests that this may not be true. Many villa sites include both roundhouses and rectilinear buildings with Roman architectural features – not only sites where the roundhouse appears to have been abandoned after the construction of new buildings, or where roundhouses seem to have been occupied by workers rather than the inhabitants of the villa, but sites where roundhouse and villa were contemporaneous. One such site is Holme House in northern Yorkshire, which boasted a roundhouse (probably LPRIA in construction) and a rectangular building constructed somewhat later. Both were occupied at the same time; the floor areas were similar, and at the time of its initial construction, the "villa" was made of the same construction materials (clay and wattle with a thatched roof) as the roundhouse. Later on bath and dining suites were added onto the rectilinear building, but at the initial time of its construction the only major distinction between it and its neighbor was shape (Harding 2004, 166). The oft-touted comforts of the villa are entirely absent, which raises the question of how these buildings were used by the estate's residents. Mattingly brings up an example from colonial Africa, where a local chieftain's residence included both European-style buildings, used for receiving and entertaining people and as

a demonstration of his responsibilities, and traditional rondavels (roundhouses), in which he and his family actually dwelled (2006, 375). It is possible that some villa sites in Britain may have functioned in similar ways, especially those which show site continuity from the LPRIA into the Roman period.

One of the major questions concerning Romano-British villas is who they belonged to. The palace at Fishbourne is often associated with Togidubnus, ruler of a pre-Roman client kingdom on in the area of Chichester, and there are a number of other early villas in the region. Fishbourne is exceptional amongst Roman villas for its size and appointment and is often used as a prime example of either "Romanizing" – Togidubnus, accustomed to a luxurious lifestyle from his days in Rome, actively sought to imitate Italian villas in style – or as a sort of "palliative" from the Roman conquerors to the indigenous elite (Mattingly 2006, 387). Not so much a "look upon my works and despair," but "look upon my works and live the high life." Fishbourne, of course, is hardly typical for either Britain or the first century, but does stand out for these reasons. The relative scarcity of villas dating from the first and second centuries has led some scholars to theorize that they were the residences, not of local elites, but of incomers to Britain – imperial administrators, retired veterans, the first millennium equivalent of carpetbaggers, and absentee continental landlords (de la Bédoyère 2015, 167). It was general practice for Rome to seize lands in the aftermath of a conquest, some of which was doled out for new settlements like *coloniae* and some which would be retained as state-owned *ager publicus* or for public estates. Some might be returned to the previous residents depending on their performance during the conquest or its aftermath, but it could also be given to other individuals (Mattingly 2006, 353). It was all about the best

way to exploit the territory; new lands were meant to be productive for Rome in one way or another, and Britain was no exception. The difficulty in Britain is that it is nearly impossible to tell who owned or resided on such properties.

In a few cases names can be definitively associated with certain properties. The Villa Faustini is listed in the Antonine Itinerary; presumably when this was compiled in the third century it was owned by someone named Faustinus. Unfortunately, the Villa Faustini (probably in Suffolk or Norfolk) has never been identified with any known villa site (de la Bédoyère 2015, 167). In other cases, scholars have attempted to identify the owners of villas from inscriptions of nearby tombs or from mosaics inside the villas, usually without success. One particularly interesting example comes from Thruxton in Hampshire, where the mosaic floor includes the inscription QUINTUS NATALIUS NATALINUS ET BODENI (RIB 2448.9). The floor was probably laid in the late third or early fourth century, presumably when Q. Natalius Natalinus was the villa's owner. The use of the full three names indicates a Roman citizen, and evidently a wealthy one given the mosaic and the villa (of the aisled hall type). The *et Bodeni* is the interesting part here; de la Bédoyère theorizes that it may have been a doubled name, with the tripartite Latin name being the owner's "official" name, and Bodenus his native personal name (2015, 175). Ling suggests that it may be incomplete (the inscription is not fully preserved), or perhaps indicative of a nominative plural or a genitive (2007, 67-8). If de la Bédoyère is correct, the Thruxton inscription would be one of the few cases where a dual name is preserved, indicating that some Romano-Britons may have had "public" Latin and "private" Celtic names, as was seen elsewhere in the Roman world (most prominently in Egypt) and is still practiced today in some cultures.

The "villa landscape" of Roman Britain was largely limited to southern and eastern England, though as mentioned above, some villas have been found in the north and west; they are substantially smaller and more scattered than in the densely populated south. There are somewhere between five hundred and three thousand villas in Britain, a startling discrepancy that displays the difficulty in identifying sites; some scholars claim that there were numerous non-villa farmsteads, while others identify all farmsteads as villas (Mattingly 2006, 370; Scott 2004, 55; Dark 2004). Palatial villas like Fishbourne were extremely rare; most British villas were small or medium-sized farmsteads, some of which boasted tessellated mosaics, bath suites, dining suites, or other displays of Roman culture. Many of these luxuries were added on in the third or fourth centuries, perhaps indicating an increase of wealth in Britain. Some of these sites had been occupied prior to the conquest, and thus are likely to indicate continued residence of the same family; others doubtless passed through several hands over the years. Some doubtless belonged to landowners who lived outside of Britain, occupied by local administrators (Scott 2004, 42). It is commonly believed that the bulk of all villas in Britain were occupied by native elites, rather than immigrants (or by this point, their descendants) from the continent, so that they served as major visual displays of Roman cultural sophistication. The majority of estates at this point seem to have been tenurial, with local elites administering large estates and controlling the tenants who lived there in a manner similar to the Roman patron-client relationship. Villa buildings existed at the heart of these productive estates, which by the fourth century were the economic center of Britain as cities dwindled (Cunliffe 2013, 104; Dark 2004, 281; Scott 2004, 54). The classical Mediterranean

structure which first and second century Britain had attempted to set up and emulate had, as Fleming suggests, "been hijacked by the Romanized British elite" (2010, 10).

It seems unlikely that there was any "hijacking" going on; rather, society shifted due to economic, social, and political changes outside the control of anyone within Britain in ways that scholars are still not certain of. One of the ways in which this is most – and simultaneously least – evident is in the so-called small towns of Roman Britain. These are usually described as one of the peculiarities of Romano-British society, though similar conglomerations also appear in Gaul (Mattingly 2006, 289). They comprise a sort of "rural urban" settlement, a category in between isolated farms and larger towns and cities, and make up the most numerous form of urban settlement in Britain (some seventy or eighty), far outnumbering organized cities and towns. The label "small town" is a sort of nebulous catch-all term, since the most prominent characteristic of the small towns is their extreme diversity of form. They have been very loosely categorized as industrial, religious, and administrative, but there is no similarity of form within these categories. Some are walled, others unwalled; some are cult centers, others nucleated settlements; some, like Bath, had large temple complexes, while others were made up of only a scattered collection of buildings (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2014; Rogers 2015, 128). They do not seem to follow any preexisting urban form, either imported from the Mediterranean or indigenous to Britain, and they appear all over Britain.

Their peak seems to have been around the beginning of the fourth century, following the decline of cities in the British economy in the third century, though it is likely that many of them existed in some form beforehand. Cult centers like Bath, Worcester, and Neatham seem to have had some meaning for native dwellers of the

surrounding landscape prior to the coming of the Roman; indeed, sites like these are often more British than Roman in form – Worcester had a circular shrine, while Neatham had a number of votive wells (Fleming 2010, 13). Others were closely linked to local industries like mining or pottery production, while seem to have been primarily residential, boasting roundhouses alongside rectilinear structures. Wealthy houses are uncommon, though not unheard of; larger sites like Bath had villa clusters in the area (Taylor 2007; Mattingly 2006, 286; Fleming 2010, 13). Like everything else in Britain, life seemed to have pushed out from the core – the cities – to the periphery, the social area which was occupied by the small towns. To some extent they seem to have been linked to the military economy; the military was a heavy consumer of local products in Britain, influencing the direction of production and supply. This may have spelled their doom in the latter part of the fourth century and the fifth century.

Even in the fourth century cities like York and London were hardly unoccupied. They were smaller than they had been previously, but had hardly been abandoned. Likewise, larger towns show evidence of continued occupation in the third and fourth centuries, despite some disuse and disrepair (Bowden 2013, 56). Public spaces seem as though they suffer the greatest, perhaps indicating a different method for Romano-British elites to display their wealth; even prior to the third century Britain lagged behind equivalent continental sites in villas, public monuments, and other acts of euergetism. This has occasionally been viewed by scholars as something of a failure of Roman culture to firmly imprint on the British consciousness; John Creighton has suggested that perhaps the indigenous British elite had other ways of asserting status that were incompatible with traditional Roman methods (2006, 153). On the other hand, as has

been discussed above, there are elements of imported Romanness at all levels of society in Britain, from the structure of living spaces on both the macro- (towns and cities) and micro- (individual dwelling places) levels to the adoption and adaptation of material culture and technology, including dining assemblages, culinary trends, and technological changes for farming, mining, and pottery. The varied inhabitants of Britain, native and incomer, adapted the parts of Roman culture that they found useful or interesting and ignored the parts that they did not.

Robin Fleming has called the years from AD 290 to 360 "the most Roman moment in British history" (2010, 21). Perhaps not the most *classical* moment, but at this time even elsewhere in the empire there were massive shifts going on, and the traditional classicism of the High Empire no longer prevailed as a societal standard (if, indeed, it had ever been one). In both its differences and its similarities it had much in common with other Roman provincial societies as varied as Gaul, Italy (now increasingly decentered in an eastward-shifting Roman consciousness), and North Africa (Fleming 2010, 21). Economy was monetarily-focused and relatively stable, though there seems to have been a decline in the number of imported products, leading to an increase in local production (Evans 2013, 430; Dark 2004, 283). Villa culture in the south was thriving, centering production and consumption on these elite residences. Despite the troubles on the continent and possibly in Britain itself, daily life seemed to be thriving.

Then everything changed.

The Long Winter: the 5th century AD

On the morning of an otherwise unremarkable day in AD 410, no one in Britain woke up to the news that they were no longer Romans. In 410, the city of Rome was sacked by the Goths and Britain ceased to be a part of the Roman Empire, either voluntarily or otherwise (see also Mattingly 2006, 529). Society in Roman Britain seems to have been in decline for some time before this, though the archaeology is uncertain and the chronology hopelessly mixed up in the traditional narrative of the so-called "decline and fall."

Contrary to previous beliefs that Britain had been completely or mostly denuded of its garrison in or prior to AD 410, recent scholarship has shown that military forces remained in the north well into the fifth century, continuing to maintain, to a greater or lesser extent, Roman ways of life (Collins 2012). At Piercebridge, a fort in County Durham, new drains were being put in during AD 410, while the bathhouse was being adapted to fit these drains. An olive oil amphora dated to the mid-fifth century shows that it was occupied and in contact with Mediterranean trade well after Britain had ceased to be "Roman" (Cool 2014, 20). Other forts, even as far north as Hadrian's Wall, continued to be occupied. To some extent this occupation shifted in type and focus – for example, *horrea* (granaries) ceased to be used for storage in the fourth century at the Wall forts of South Shields and Birdoswald, suggesting that the garrisons there no longer needed to store large amounts of grain (Gardner 2007, 168). By this point most of the British troops (now *limitanei*, as Constantine had separated out frontier garrisons from field armies in the early fourth century) seem to have their origins in local populations – as Wilmott put it, "troops who perhaps share the ethnic and cultural background of the

people around, but who were the hereditary possessors of the Roman military tradition" (2000, 17). The forts and the military communities which occupied them – encompassing not only the soldiery themselves, but also family members, slaves, and the civilians who made life on the frontier possible – would have adapted to these changed circumstances, losing some markers of Roman life, while keeping hold of others, perhaps as markers of identity (Collins 2012, 161). Whether or not they still considered themselves Roman is another question entirely, and one likely impossible to answer.

Previous beliefs about the decline and disappearance of the military have also impacted the trajectory of scholarship on the small towns. It is very difficult to date most sites in Britain for the fifth century moving forwards; new bronze coinage mostly ceased following AD 402, while the pottery industries seem to have partially or totally collapsed. Fourth century coins and artifacts (and some dating further back) remained in circulation, providing a much earlier *terminus post quem* than AD 400 and confusing the stratigraphy of the period (Cool 2014; Guest 2014, 119). It was previously accepted that most or all of the small towns in Britain had been in decline or even collapse prior to AD 400, with the removal of the military and the collapse of the economy removing their *raison d'être*, creating a picturesque image of dozens of ghost towns withering away across Britain (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2014, 46). Now, as more scholars turn their attention to individual small towns, it seems that a number of them remained occupied. The vast diversity of the small towns means that case studies of a few select settlements cannot stand for the lot, but they do provide exceptions to the traditional narrative. Baldock, a small town in Hertfordshire, for example, had contracted in the fourth century but also had new buildings constructed during the same period. Burials at the site continued into the fifth

century, as did maintenance of parts of the road (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2010; 2014). Elsewhere in Britain, small towns are equally different to date; many do seem to have been abandoned, but others retained occupation in some form. This should not come as a surprise; Britain was always more heterogeneous than scholarship has leaned towards, and different sites would have reacted differently to different economic circumstances, with or without a dramatic collapse or influx of Anglo-Saxon invaders (the latter of which has been very little touched on here). Large towns and cities also retained occupation, but not in the traditional Roman or classical style which had heretofore been practiced – "life in towns," as Gerrard puts it, rather than "town life" (2013, 163).

Villas too seem to have been in decline in the fifth century, after suffering dramatic growth in the third and fourth centuries. Villas, the preeminent Roman architectural form in Britain, like towns retained their occupants, but their use seems to have shifted in the fifth century. This takes the form of what is often called "squatter occupation," due to the fact that previous architectural examples of elite display were damaged or drastically altered for more practical purposes – furnaces, granaries, and other industrial and agricultural content were all inserted into villa rooms at different sites, while other rooms show evidence of what seems to be rubbish disposal (Gerrard 2013, 165). "Squatter occupation" seems to be something of a misnomer, as there is no evidence that the original inhabitants of these villas had moved on, leaving the buildings open to all-comers. It is of a part with the decline of the towns both small and large and of the military, positing a mass exodus from Britain that there is no evidence for. Some villas do seem to have been abandoned, but the archaeology is unclear; it is impossible to tell whether this was a gradual abandonment as living spaces contracted and unused

rooms were left to molder, or if the inhabitants left all at once (Scott 2004, 56). In those villas that remained occupied, ostentatious display no longer seems to have been important, or even possible. What has previously been turned "squatter occupation" instead seems to be the reorganization of the villa's purpose from luxurious display to functional use, revealing a seemingly post-apocalyptic shift in values (Dark 2004, 289). Why this might be is difficult to determine, but what is clear is that over the course of a century, it became both less possible and less important for elite villa-dwellers to maintain the trappings of Roman culture.

This was not universally true throughout Britain. In the aftermath of the fourth century, numerous communities attempted to maintain the same ways of living to which they had previously been accustomed. Robin Fleming's study of three sub-Roman communities has shown that their use of Roman-identified material culture varied wildly from place to place, displaying the diversity of post-Roman Britain. Cadbury Congresbury, a hill fort community with buildings varying from rectilinear longhouses to traditional roundhouses, seem to have actively sought out intact Roman pottery and glass, possibly even grave-robbing in order to keep up their use of these items after they became impossible to produce. In the fifth century, graves were one of the few places where large stocks of unbroken glass and ceramic vessels could be found, if one did not mind their macabre origins. At Baldock, a former small town, the community continued to bury with Romano-British traditions, placing pots at the feet of the dead until they seem to have finally run out of Romano-British pots which they could use for this purpose. One of these pots showed extremely hard use; originally dating from the fourth century, it seems to have been in circulation for at least half a century by the time it was

deposited in a grave. At a third site, Barrow Hills, the use of Roman-style pots was not for use or as grave goods, but instead as molds for round brooches – the base of wheel-thrown pots being perfectly suited for this use (Fleming 2014). All of these sites carried on well into the fifth century, long after Britain had stopped being Roman – perhaps even after Roman Britain was out of living memory. But life carried on.

4. Shattered Empire

In the aftermath of empire, Britain seems to have muddled on in the way that it could: with a great deal of variety. Some settlements maintained, or attempted to maintain, Roman-style lifestyles; others apparently regressed to Iron Age ways of living. Still others scrabbled in the ruins of the empire, like something out of a post-apocalyptic novel: squatting in the crumbling villas of the long-fled elites, smashing through mosaics, herding their cattle through what had once been basilicas, and digging up graves to scavenge for pottery and glass that the dead had no use for. Within a generation, perhaps two, the invading Anglo-Saxons had moved in, creating new social structures in which Roman ways of life had no place. Britain's four hundred years as part of the Roman empire had come to an end with nothing left to show for it except the decrepit remains of a lost civilization.

In the long term of sub-Roman and medieval Britain, it is difficult to argue with this conclusion. It no longer appears that invading hordes of German settlers appeared in the immediate aftermath of the Roman departure, as was previously believed by scholars; instead, there seems to have been a period of several decades between the end of Roman rule and the appearance of distinctly Germanic sites, though this varies from site to site. In the year 420 there were still those who had grown up under Roman rule, albeit an increasingly weak Roman rule; a hundred years later Rome was not even a memory.

Britain was within the Roman sphere of influence for nearly six hundred years, beginning in the second century BC. During this period, it existed simultaneously as a distant land of nearly mythic proportions, separated from the familiar mainland by Ocean and populated by monsters and wild men, and a backwater province which produced

some exports but no individuals of worth and which required a constant stream of soldiers. Prior to Caesar's invasion in 54 BC, some tribes in Britain carried on trade with the continent and had contact with Rome, something that only increased in the century between Caesar and Claudius. During this period, goods and people passed across the Channel, and Roman and Roman-style products were adapted, adopted, or ignored entirely by various groups of native Britons.

These three options did not change much once Britain came under Roman rule. One of the major failings of archaeology is that it is not always possible to tell how material culture was used, merely that it was present; in Romano-British studies this has led to an assumption that Roman or Roman-style material culture is evidence of Roman-style ways of living. In Britain, as elsewhere in the empire, there were also a large number in incomers – civil officials and their households, merchants and other individuals seeking to benefit from this new addition to the empire, and perhaps most drastically for Britain, the military, the single largest foreign body on the island. All of these incomers, hailing from across the empire, brought elements of their own cultures with them. How much interaction they had with native Britons is difficult to tell, but there is little indication that these different social groups were sequestered away from each other. There must have been a great deal of cross-cultural interaction, allowing for the spread of culture in both directions.

Some regions of Britain adapted more elements of Roman culture than others, especially in the south and east. These are the parts of the island which had been in contact with Rome and the continent prior to the conquest; following the assumption of Roman rule, they became the most heavily urbanized parts of the country, boasting

Roman-style towns, classically-inspired temples, and villas that differed only in scale from those that ranged the empire. Other areas in Britain, however, continued on much as they had before, with small settlements and traditional roundhouses that changed only slowly, if at all. Regions in Britain with indigenous ceramic traditions continued to produce them, sometimes adapting Roman technology and forms, sometimes not. Regions that had been aceramic prior to the conquest continued to be aceramaic afterwards. In the north, where the presence of the military was felt most heavily, pre-Roman lifestyles continued to predominate, but it was not immune to Roman culture; Roman settlements like Eboracum (York) were founded, while other settlements sprang up around various forts. Though far rarer in the frontier region than in the settled south, even that most Roman of objects, the villa, was found in the north.

Despite all this, Roman Britain remained to a great degree the land of the roundhouse. Britons spoke Latin, probably on a daily basis, if the curse tablets from Bath, Uley, and London are any indication; these show evidence of colloquial speech which indicates that by the third century, a distinctly British dialect of Latin had appeared. But native languages also persisted; those same curse tablets show a preponderance of Celtic names and Latinized names of Celtic origin, as well as the handful of tablets which seem to include transliterated Celtic. In Hertfordshire, the Celtic language seems to have continued to be spoken into the sixth century at the earliest (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2014, 52). Latin, it seems, was not as widely spoken in Britain as it was in some other provinces, where it developed into the modern Romance languages. Likewise, urbanization did not persist in Britain to the same degree that it did in other provinces, especially in the third and fourth centuries, when the population of cities and

towns seems to have dropped as they condensed. The population of Britain continued to be predominantly rural, as it had been for centuries prior to AD 43.

Yet the preponderance of villas in the third and fourth centuries shows that this was a Roman-style existence, albeit not a classical one. Many of these sites continued to be occupied following the end of Roman rule, some of them as their living spaces literally fell apart around them due to the lack of specialized builders (White 2014, 160). It is this more than anything that proves that Roman culture was not, as some scholars have theorized, a "thin veneer" over Iron Age British life. By the dawn of the fifth century, Britain was incontrovertibly Roman, albeit in its own quixotic way. Its inhabitants were Roman citizens and Latin-speakers; this does not erase the fact that many of them also lived in roundhouses, spoke Celtic, and refused to eat hare. They were no less Roman than their neighbors across the Channel. By the close of the fifth century, Rome was out of living memory of all its residents and a new order was rising. Roman Britain had become something else.

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AE	L'Annee Epigraphique
RIB	Roman Inscriptions of Britain

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[Note: all translations are the author's.]

Ausonius	*Epigrammata Ausonii di diversis rebus*
Caesar	*De bello gallico*
Claudian	*De consulatu Stilichonis*
Cassius Dio	*Historiae Romanae*
Tacitus	*Annales*
Tacitus	*De vita Iulii Agricolae*

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Biography

Katrina Knight was born in Seattle, Washington, and grew up in Ellensburg, a small town whose biggest event of the year was the county fair and rodeo. She attended Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, for her undergraduate degree and graduated in 2012 with a double major in Medieval and Early Modern Studies and Classical Studies, as well as a double minor in History and English Literature, thus handily covering the entire span of western European history and culture from the Bronze Age to the seventeenth century. Following this she attended the University of Leicester in the United Kingdom and graduated in 2013 with a master of arts in the Archaeology of the Roman World, writing her MA dissertation on war-captives in the Roman world. She returned to Tulane in 2014 to continue her graduate study in classics.